

Closing Argument – SB287 – Consumer Health Freedom and Access Act (Sen. Joe Balyeat)

I knew from the outset that I'd have opposition to this bill. And despite Ms. Kimmet's high hopes and her bending over backwards to meet the demands and requests of various boards, I forewarned her that in the end these licensed boards and practitioners will all line up against her in opposition to this bill. Lots of opposition – from the licensed practitioners of every kind, and the licensing boards of every kind, and the licensed practitioner testers, and licensed practitioner educators, and the licensed practitioner tester licensers and licensees, and practitioner educator licensors and licensees, and of course each of their respective boards as well. *And if we had them, I'm sure even the licensed practitioner tester and educator board certifiers would be here in opposition too.* All crying that this bill is a breach of public safety.

**But remarkably, the public, the consumers whose safety is supposedly being breached; are almost unanimously in favor of this legislation.** I've been keeping every message I got on SB287. I received a total of 8 messages opposing it – not a single one from consumers; every single one of them from licensed health care providers claiming the sky will fall if we choose to let health care freedom ring. **I also received perhaps a hundred messages supporting SB287, every single one from consumers, those who supposedly are putting themselves at risk. They want freedom to care for their own health in the way that their own hearts and minds guide them is best. They don't want a licensed nanny state prohibiting them from obtaining the care that they think best, that they want.** I'm not sure what the licensed care providers are afraid of – even if we pass this bill, they'll still have a huge competitive advantage – their services are all covered by third party insurance, while none of this alternative health care is covered. These consumers want freedom to get the type of care they believe in, even if that means paying for it from their own pockets in addition to their health insurance.

What is the alternative to this approach? Does any of you really want to tackle 1200 different licensing bills, and 1200 different boards, and 1200 difference scope of practice definitions? And 1200 different licenses fees? And then have to deal with the myriad of turf battles where all these different practices start overlapping one another?

Are all of these 1200 different practices things which I'd want to do for my own care? Certainly not, but I don't think that really matters because that's not the question before us. It was Abraham Lincoln who said, "Those who would deny freedom to others, deserve it not for themselves."

**This bill is about educating consumers with prior disclaimers, protecting consumers with proper prohibited acts, and allowing consumers freedom to care for their own health and their own bodies in the way they see fit. This bill establishes no new rights or exemptions. It merely codifies existing case law... whether the licensing boards are willing to admit it or not. As I've said before, it is often the duty of this committee to discern and sort out what laws are really to protect public safety versus what laws are to protect against competition or protect someone's paycheck. I submit that SB287 walks that fine line of balancing freedom with public safety, and I urge this committee to give it a "Do Pass" recommendation. Thank you for a good hearing.**